item which has appeared in a section of the press that there have been clashes in Siachen between Indian and Pakistani troops during the last week of September, 1987, resulting in heavy casualties;

(b) if so, what are the details of the attack;

(c) what is the number of Indian Jawans injured and killed in these clashes; and

(d) whether any protest has been lodged with the Government of Pakistan; if so, what has been the reaction of that Government in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL). (a) and (b) During the last week of September, Pakistani forces, in a battalion strength, attacked our posts on the Saltoro ridge area of Siachen. The attacks were preceded by heavy concentration of artillery fire The Pakistani troops also used rockets and missiles.

(c) There have been a few casualties on our side. Pakistani troops are understood to have suffered heavy casualties. It would not be desirable to disclose details.

(d) No protest has been lodged with the Government of Pakistan in this regard.

**Regional non-proliferation agreement**

629. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement reportedly made by the Pakistani Foreign Minister, inaugurating a conference on non-proliferation in South Asia in Islamabad on the 1st September, 1987, wherein he has pleaded for equality and non-discrimination *vis-a-vis* India in the nuclear field on the basis of regional non proliferation agreement;

(b) if so, what was the precise statement made by the Pak Foreign Minister; and

(c) what is the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The statement found wide publicity in our Press of the 2nd September. In effect, the then Pakistan Foreign Minister made some suggestions of a bilateral and regional nature on the issue of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in South Asia.

(c) Government are of the view that there can be no bilateral or regional solution to the dangers of nuclear proliferation. This is a global issue which can only be tackled globally. Moreover, the statement goes fill with Pakistan's single-minded drive for a nuclear-weapons capability.

**Pak adapting F-16 for bomb delivery**

630. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report from London, published in the 'Hindustan Times' dated October 3, 1987 captioned "Pak adapting F-16 for bomb delivery" quoting experts in Lonodn that 'Islamabad has nearly completed a transportable nuclear bomb' and is busy adapting one of the F-16 air-craft at Kamra West of Islamabad for the delivery of its first nuclear bomb;

(b) if so, whether the report has since been confirmed; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) and (c) Government are aware of Pakistan's single minded drive to acquire a nuclear weapons capability. Government are keeping under constant review this as well as all other developments having a bearing on the country's security.

**Indo-US vaccine action programme**

631. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA:

DR G VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY:

SHRI MIRZA IRSHADBAIG:

SHRI N. E. BALARAM:

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA.

DR H. P. SHARMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Indo-US vaccine project has been signed, by-passing the high power biotechnology scientific advisory committee set up by Government; if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that the steps postulated in the agreement are likely to come in the way of setting up our own research and development laboratories and would have dangerous impact on the immunity pattern of Indians;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the data obtained by the United States can be used against this country and would expose our country to biological warfare designs of our enemies;

(d) if so, what are the reasons for entering into such an agreement;

(e) whether some eminent Indian scientists etc. have demanded review of the agreement; and

(f) if so, what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) The Indo-US Vaccine Action Programme (VAP) was signed on 9th July, 1987 after necessary and due examination, clearances and approvals by various concerned Departments and scientific agencies of the Government of India The question of bypassing the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Department of Biotechnology, therefore, does not arise.

(b) No Sir; the Indo-US VAP will not in any manner in the way of indigenous research and development for new, safe and effective vaccines and immunodiagnostics. The VAP will be complementary to and supplement our own indigenous efforts for which already considerable steps have been taken by the Ministry of Health, the ICMR and the Ministry of Science & Technology. The programme will deal with diseases that are already prevalent as major diseases in the country. The work-programme under the VAP would not have any undesirable impact on the so-called immunity pattern of Indians.

(c) No Sir; the VAP is not expected in any way to be used against our country not to expose our country to biological warfare designs of our enemies.

(d) The main objectives for entering into the VAP was to evolve and implement a joint R&D programme with the best scientific specialist groups in US towards research and development of safe and efficacious vaccines against some of the major communicable diseases that presently take a large toll in India in terms of morbidity and mortality and for which, at the present time, effective and safe vaccines are not available. VAP would also